

ORGANIZATION OF THE OFFICE OF PLANT AND OPERATIONS TABLE OF CONTENTS

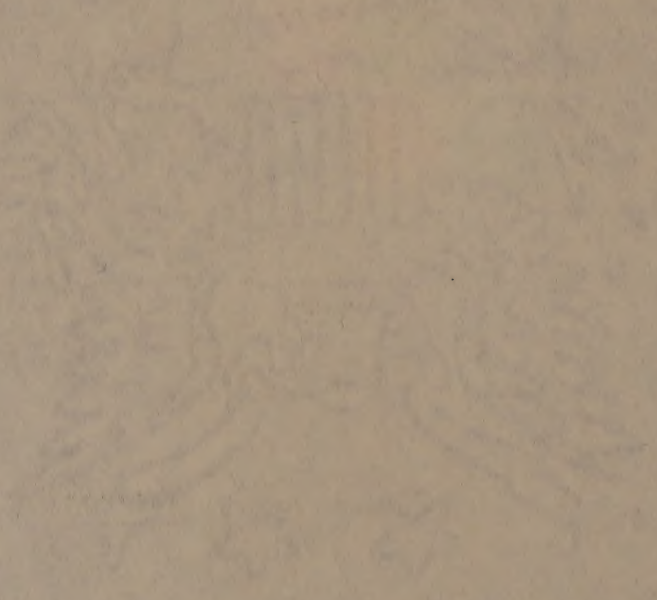
SECTION 4

REPORT OF P&O ACTIVITIES

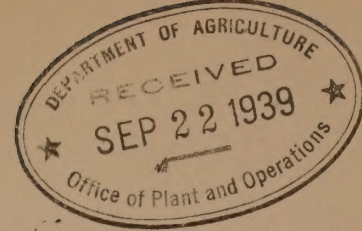
1. Copy of Mr. Thatcher's memorandum of September 15, 1939 to the Secretary reporting the activities of the Office of Plant and Operations and expressing its views of the Secretary's memorandum of August 16, 1939 regarding increased efficiency in the promulgation of Department work, together with memoranda from the Technical Advisory Board and the Space Section concerning the same subjects.

2.

ORGANIZATION OF THE
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
TABLE OF CONTENTS
SECTION I



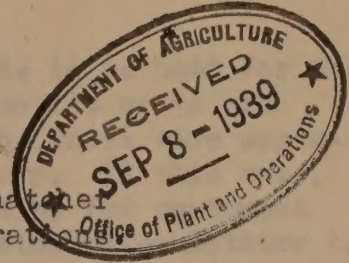
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D. C.



XXXXXXXXXXXX

OFFICE OF PLANT AND OPERATIONS

September 6, 1939



Memorandum for Mr. Arthur B. Thatcher
Chief, Office of Plant and Operations

Dear Mr. Thatcher:

In accordance with the request of the Secretary in memorandum dated August 16, 1939, in regard to increased efficiency in the promulgation of Department of Agriculture work, the Technical Advisory Board offers the following suggestions in conformity with the Technical Advisory Board's duties as set forth in the Secretary's memorandum No. 819, dated May 12, 1939.

I. The Board has reviewed, during the fiscal year of 1939, a total of 737 specifications for the procurement of equipment for the Department. Forty-four per cent of this total were reviewed during April, May and June. This uneven distribution of procurement activities imposes an undue burden upon the procurement facilities of the Department. This rush of work at the close of the fiscal year reduces the efficiency of Department employees and, no doubt, results in somewhat higher prices being paid for some commodities since industry realizes that the purchases must be made before the end of the fiscal year and that insufficient time exists to readvertise should the prices offered be unsatisfactory.

It would appear that one of the reasons for this seasonal congestion of purchases is that project officials wait until the last quarter of the fiscal year to see how much money may be available in their budget for the purchase of equipment. Due to the fact that any unexpended balance of the appropriation reverts to the Treasury at the end of the fiscal year, an endeavor is made to "save" this fund by expending it for equipment.

The Board offers two solutions to this problem.

a. Bureaus or Agencies refuse to honor requisitions after March 1 of each year, except for equipment which can be procured on standard specification or in cases of exigency.

7 cont.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

WASHINGTON, D.C.

September 2, 1933

Office of Plant and Operations



Memorandum for Mr. Arthur E. Morgan
Chief, Office of Plant and Operations

Dear Mr. Morgan:

In accordance with the request of the Secretary in memorandum dated August 15, 1933, to review the progress of the work of the Technical Advisory Board of the Department of Agriculture, the Technical Advisory Board of the Department of Agriculture is submitting herewith a report on the progress of its work during the fiscal year 1933.

1. The Board was organized during the fiscal year of 1933. Its total of 175 specialists for the procurement of equipment for the Department. Forty-four percent of this total were reviewed during April, May and June. This uneven distribution of procurement activities was due to the fact that the Board was organized during the fiscal year 1933. This was the first year of work at the close of the fiscal year 1932. The Board of Department employees and no doubt, results in somewhat better service than in the past. It is hoped that the Board will be able to make before the end of the fiscal year and that intelligent time should be made before the end of the fiscal year.

2. It would appear that one of the reasons for this seasonal variation of purchases is that most of the purchases are made in the last quarter of the fiscal year to see how much money may be available in their hands for the purchase of equipment. Due to the fact that the Board was organized at the end of the fiscal year, an endeavor is made to "save" this fund by expanding it for equipment.

The Board offers two solutions to this problem.

a. Bureau of Agriculture to honor reservations after March 1 of each year, except for equipment which can be procured on standard requisition or in case of emergency.

b. Revise the law to allow appropriated funds to be used for the purchase of equipment by the various Bureaus and Agencies up to six months after the end of the fiscal year for which the funds were appropriated before the money should revert to the Treasury. In this case, Bureaus or Agencies should refuse to honor requisitions for equipment chargeable to the preceding fiscal year's appropriation after October 1.

It is believed that either of these procedures would eliminate the hasty purchase of equipment in order to expend the funds appropriated before the end of the fiscal year; facilitate procurement by spreading purchases more uniformly, and perhaps obtain more advantageous price competition.

II. A preliminary study of the use of equipment indicates surplus property in nearly all Bureaus and Agencies that is not being used to the best interests of the Department.

It would appear that two major reasons can be cited for this condition.

a. The present cumbersome method of transferring surplus property from one Bureau to another, contributes to the inefficient use of Department equipment.

b. A Bureau is reluctant to transfer idle equipment to another Bureau who might have immediate use for the particular equipment because no reimbursement for the equipment is allowed and future operations may require its use.

III. It is suggested that more efficient use of equipment and supplies could be obtained by:

1. Obtaining the necessary legislative authority to permit the renting of equipment from one agency to another and placing such funds to the credit of the appropriation to be expended in accordance with existing law and for the purpose for which appropriated.

2. The reimbursement of a Bureau by another Bureau when a transfer of equipment occurs.

3. Streamlining the procedure of transferring surplus property from one Bureau or Agency to another.

b. Revises the law to allow appropriated funds to be used for the purchase of equipment by the various bureaus and agencies up to six months after the end of the fiscal year for which the funds were appropriated before the money should revert to the Treasury. In this case, bureaus or agencies should refuse to honor requisitions for equipment chargeable to the preceding fiscal year's appropriation after October 1.

It is believed that either of these procedures would eliminate the heavy purchase of equipment in order to expend the funds appropriated before the end of the fiscal year. Facilities provided by spreading purchases more uniformly, and a more obtainable and advantageous price competition.

II. A preliminary study of the use of equipment indicates surplus property in nearly all bureaus and agencies that is not being used to the best interests of the Department.

It would appear that two major reasons can be cited for this condition.

a. The present cumbersome method of transferring surplus property from one bureau to another, contributes to the inefficient use of Department equipment.

b. A bureau is reluctant to transfer this equipment to another bureau who might have immediate use for the particular equipment because no reimbursement for the equipment is allowed and future operations may require its use.

III. It is suggested that more efficient use of equipment and supplies could be obtained by:

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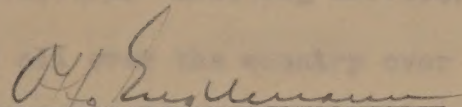
3. Streamlining the procedure of transferring surplus property from one bureau or agency to another.

4. The establishment of centrally located idle equipment pools by the Department where temporarily idle equipment might be stored and then distributed or rented to any Bureau or Agency in need of such equipment.

5. The establishment of coordinated inspection service within the Department and the use of highly trained inspection service such as has been established by the Navy Department.

It is the opinion of the Technical Advisory Board that if proper action were to be taken as outlined, the expenditure of Department funds for equipment during the next and subsequent years could be materially reduced. This reduction of expenditure within a few years should result in a decrease of investment in equipment by all Bureaus and Agencies in the Department of several million dollars.

Very truly yours,



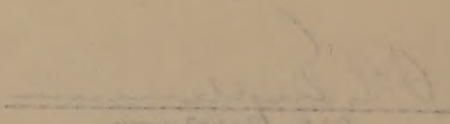
Otto Engelmann
Chairman, Technical Advisory Board

4. The establishment of centrally located idle equipment pools by the Department was a temporary expedient which might be altered and then discontinued or limited to any number of agencies in need of such equipment.

5. The establishment of coordinated inspection service within the Department and the use of highly trained inspection service units as has been established by the Navy Department.

It is the opinion of the Technical Advisory Board that if proper action were to be taken as outlined, the expenditures of Department funds for equipment during the next and subsequent years could be materially reduced. This reduction of expenditures within a few years should result in a decrease of investment in equipment by all agencies and agencies in the Department of several million dollars.

Very truly yours,


Otto Engelmann
Chairman, Technical Advisory Board

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. ARTHUR B. THATCHER

In talking with Mr. Koehl of the Department Telegraph and Telephone Office, it has been brought to my attention pretty forcibly that the Department Telegraph and Telephone Office as such does not handle and does not have supervision over all telegraph activities of this Department.

At the present time I am not in a position to state as to what the actual cost is for maintaining market news service telegraphic system and the Weather Bureau telegraphic system, but it is my conviction that if someone from the Secretary's Office could be authorized to make a detailed survey of conditions as they exist that many thousands of dollars could be saved in the handling of the Department's telegraphic business.

At the present time there is a Mr. William C. TenEyck in charge of the Market News Service of the Agricultural Marketing Service, where market news is received and dispatched all over the country over their leased wire hook-up. It is my understanding that this is done entirely by the Morse key rather than by the newer system of the multiplex machines. Incidentally the salaries of telegraphers are rated higher than those of multiplex operators.

In the Weather Bureau a Mr. Fred N. Graff is in charge of the Weather Bureau leased wire service where weather reports are received constantly. These offices are equipped with Western Union telegraph page printers, which it is believed will gradually replace both the Morse operators and the multiplex equipment now generally in use.

As stated above I am not in a position to state what the actual costs to the Department are, but I am positive that if this matter could be discussed with someone in authority in the Secretary's Office and this situation called to their attention, that remedial steps would

is being with Mr. Keen of the Department of Telegraph and Telephone Office. It has been brought to my attention pretty fairly that the Department of Telegraph and Telephone Office as such does not handle and does not have supervision over all telegraph activities of this Department. At the present time I am not in a position to state as to what the actual cost is for maintaining carrier news service telegraphic system and the Weather Bureau telegraphic system, but it is my conviction that if someone from the Secretary's Office could be authorized to make a detailed survey of conditions as they exist that many thousands of dollars could be saved in the handling of the Department's telegraphic business.

At the present time there is a Mr. William G. Conner in charge of the Market News Service of the Agricultural Marketing Service, where market news is received and dispatched all over the country over their leased wire hook-up. It is my understanding that this is done entirely by the Morse key rather than by the newer system of the multiplex machines. Undoubtedly the salaries of telegraphers are rated higher than those of multiplex operators.

In the Weather Bureau a Mr. Fred W. Craft is in charge of the Weather Bureau leased wire service where weather reports are received constantly. These offices are equipped with Western Union telegraph page printers, which it is believed will gradually replace both the Morse operators and the multiplex equipment now generally in use. As stated above I am not in a position to state what the actual

costs to the Department are, but I am positive that if this matter could be discussed with someone in authority in the Secretary's Office and this situation called to their attention, that remedial steps would

probably be taken to cut administrative costs insofar as possible with good business management. Many of the leased wire hook-ups are not used so I have been informed, to their fullest extent, and much of the business of the Department could be routed over ~~the~~ this system without affecting the efficiency of the load now carried by the leased wires, resulting in a considerable saving of money to the Department.

In the Department Telegraph and Telephone Office at the present time, savings for the month of May by the use of time wire service and availing ourselves of the facilities of the Navy Communications Center and the Army Communications Center total \$2,718.

June - \$3,184
July - 2,154
August - 2,277.

For the four months, savings of approximately \$10,333, were effected and as this covers only a partial record of savings that might have been made, it is evident that considerably larger savings could be effected by having all wire service of the Department under one administrative head. This entire memorandum may be considered in the form of a suggestion in compliance with the wishes of the Secretary in his memorandum of August 16, 1939, and is an answer to question 7 (b).

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Secretary's Memorandum to Chiefs of Bureaus and Offices dated August 16th requests that certain information regarding economy be furnished. From Paragraph 4 on page 3 I am submitting the following comments for your information:

Question: Have you in mind definite administrative improvements or economies in operation that may become possible in the future?

Definite economies can be effected through the consolidation and centralized control in the handling of mail and files activities in the various bureaus of the Department. It has been demonstrated that changes of this nature cause a reduction of administrative costs of operation not only from a personnel standpoint but also from a procurement angle.

Question 5:

One of the barriers that stands in the way of accomplishing the centralization discussed in question 4 is a lack of a sufficiently large budget to ~~apply~~ employ qualified file procedure men to assist in the centralization of records. Another barrier is that in this Department as well as others ~~it~~ has been a sad lack of cooperation on the part of bureau and section chiefs in the matter of centralizing records and this in turn has increased the overhead administrative costs of personnel to operate ~~efficient~~ mail and file sections.

Furthermore, it is believed that this office is faced with a real barrier in the lack of the authority, or perhaps the lack of "teeth" in the authority possessed by virtue of Secretary's Memorandum No. 809, to accomplish our objectives. Collaborative methods are desirable and should be used as far as possible, but at the same time, it is felt that authority beyond mere "recommendation" is sorely needed. With the authority to enforce the use of tried and proven methods of operation where the lack of cooperation is encountered in the use of collaborative

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methods, our objectives would be more quickly and fully reached. Speed in reaching our objectives will in itself effect definite economies.



In answer to question 6, it is believed that an exhaustive study of business procedures in effect in the various bureaus could be profitably explored and at the same time many improvements for the handling and simplification of these activities would be had.

Starting as a base ^{from} for the maintenance of records, it is important that necessary records be maintained, but unnecessary duplicate records should be discontinued. Records naturally have to do with the flow of work, but too many records, I believe, are worse than not enough, for in the event that you do not have a record at least you know that you do not have it, but with too many records there is resulting confusion due to the fact that the records are maintained in many instances in so many various ways that it is impossible to determine where they commence and stop. Further, due to the fact of this duplication many times erroneous information is quoted as being authentic.

It is therefore believed that a good business engineer could do much towards the simplification of many of the procedures now in effect in the Department and that he could definitely bring about a more even flow and more economical handling of operations.

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September 15, 1939.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY

Dear Mr. Secretary:

This will acknowledge your memorandum of August 16, 1939, which was most heartily welcomed by the Office of Plant and Operations. In accordance with your request, there are transmitted herewith the views of this office concerning the subjects involved.

It should be constantly borne in mind in considering this presentation that the Office of Plant and Operations is strictly a service organization. Expenditures made on its basis are for the accomplishment of tasks which are reflected throughout all of the agencies of the Department.

1. What administrative improvements or economies in operations have been effected in your organization since July 1, 1937?

Memorandum No. 809, dated February 27, 1939, substantiates the fact that this office is a comparatively new organization assuming many functions previously performed by other agencies within the Department.

The establishment of the Office of Plant and Operations, having to do with housing problems of the Department both from immediate provision and long-range point of view; space control; registry of real property, etc.; performance of those functions assigned to the Technical Advisory Board; operation of the Department's Communication System including mail and files; discharge of administrative functions for the general Office of the Secretary; management of Beltsville Research Center and operation and maintenance of the Motor Transport system, as such functions pertain to the over-all operations of the Department, was in itself an attempt to effect administrative improvements in organization and operations.

In the short space of time that has elapsed since its establishment a change has been made from the Morse Code Key System to the more general use of the Multiplex Telegraph System, the benefits of which are explained in detail under question six.

The Technical Advisory Board has effected administrative improvements and economies in the handling of technical specifications covering aerial surveys, equipment, photography, etc., also shop activity as it pertains to maintenance and repair.

Through the efforts of the Space Section, the Secretary's criteria for space occupancy has been successfully applied.

The reorganization of lease procedure has now considerably shortened the time previously required for handling leases and related actions.

The centralization of Motor Transport and repair activities in the sub-basement of the South Building as against three separate locations, which existed heretofore, will bring about greater administrative control, efficiency and economies in operation.

2. Can the apportionments for 1940 or the estimate for 1941 be reduced as a result of any of the elements indicated under 1? If so, in what amount? If not, why?

The Office of Plant and Operations, being a service unit and in its present stage of organization, is not in a position to reduce its allotments for 1940 nor its estimates for 1941 due to the fact that it is embarking upon a program of greater improvements in operation which will result in economies for the Department as a whole.

3. Do you have in mind any other reductions, not already reflected in the apportionments for 1940 or the estimates for 1941, that can be effected without curtailing important work? If so, please indicate.

No.

4. Have you in mind definite administrative improvements or economies in operations that may become possible in the future? If so, please describe and indicate whether it seems likely that such items may make it possible to reduce appropriations in the future.

The answer to this question is predicated on the success of the program as outlined in answer to question six.

5. Have you in mind administrative improvements or economies in operation that would make it possible to reduce appropriations but that appear impossible or unlikely of accomplishment because of some barrier or barriers that stand in the way of such desirable changes? If so, please discuss and indicate what the barriers are.

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The subject of question 5, insofar as it affects the Office of Plant and Operations, is very closely coupled with the discussion that is set forth in answer to question 6 and therefore such a discussion must always be in conjunction with the extension of its service facilities.

6. If a departmental staff mechanism is established for the sole purpose of providing leadership and assistance in a continuing effort to devise and bring about improvements in administrative management and economies in operations throughout the Department, what specific fields do you consider may be most profitably explored? Your full and frank discussion of this point, together with your comment, suggestions and recommendations is requested.

The thought of establishing a departmental staff mechanism for the sole purpose of providing leadership and assistance in a continuing effort to devise and bring about improvements in administrative management and economies in operations throughout the Department is to this office the most important factor that can be discussed at this time.

It is believed that the following discussion will substantiate the position of the Office of Plant and Operations that within the fields which have been assigned, it will provide means whereby the Department can improve its efficiency, and thereby provide for reductions in administrative expenditures.

The Department of Agriculture at the present time is maintaining three telegraph offices; a central telegraph office; one in the Weather Bureau, and one in the Market News Service. Of the three telegraph facilities, the central office has accomplished an actual savings to the Department of over \$10,000 in a period of four months by the more complete utilization of Army and Navy Communications, multiplex equipment and the elimination of a large part of the Morse key transmission.

In using the multiplex equipment, it is possible to open a circuit for three minutes or any three-minute multiple above the initial period and by sending at the rate of 50 to 60 words per minute, such messages cost approximately the same as a unit message of 50 words transmitted over regular Morse Code System. For example, a 50-word message over the Morse Code system and a message of 150 to 180 words over the multiplex system cost approximately the same.

Under the present set-up there is necessarily an overlapping of personnel, telephones and other equipment that would not be required

if all three services were combined under one administrative head. A more complete utilization of leased wire systems, multiplex hook-ups and tie-lines to Army and Navy communications could be had under the suggested centralized system. Further simplification and directness of operation can be obtained by a page printer which is even faster than the multiplex machines now in use.

Material savings could be accomplished if a consolidated Departmental Telegraph System were established.

Memorandum No. 809 establishes authority to collaborate with the various bureaus on the preparation of standardized systems of filing operations. Since the issuance of this memorandum, this office has used collaborative methods which, in most instances, have been sufficient for the introduction of tried and proven methods.

Where collaborative efforts do not accomplish the intent and purpose of Memorandum No. 809, it may be necessary to adopt more effective methods. Elimination of duplicate records and standardization of operations as it pertains to the handling of correspondence, documents and records of varying types, is a major problem of the Department from the service point of view. Duplicate records retard the flow of work and many times cause confusion and embarrassment through dissemination of erroneous information. Centralization of records will conserve space and funds now used for the purchase of filing equipment and supplies.

In order to give further effect to Memorandum No. 819, the Office of Plant and Operations recommends that certain changes in established procedure be effected. These are outlined in a memorandum received from the Technical Advisory Board as follows:

"I. The Board has reviewed, during the fiscal year 1939, a total of 737 specifications for the procurement of equipment for the Department. Approximately forty-four per cent of this total was reviewed during April, May and June. This uneven distribution of procurement activities imposes an undue burden upon the procurement facilities of the Department. This rush of work at the close of the fiscal year reduces the efficiency of Departmental employees. No doubt, it also results in somewhat higher prices being paid for some commodities since industry realizes that the purchases must be made before the end of the fiscal year and that insufficient time exists to readvertise should the prices offered be unsatisfactory.

"Of course, this situation has been an annual problem to the Division of Purchase, Sales and Traffic and now affects the Technical Advisory Board in its handling of technical specifications. The problem should be studied with a view to more equitable spreading of procurement submissions, thereby providing more effective facilities

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the people have been very
kind and friendly to me.

My name is John

and I am a student of the

University of California
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for handling this work without impeding the progress of the Department's program.

"II. A preliminary study of the use of equipment indicates surplus property in nearly all bureaus and agencies that is not being used to the best interests of the Department.

"It would appear that two major reasons can be cited for this condition.

"a. The present cumbersome method of transferring surplus property from one Bureau to another, contributes to the inefficient use of Department equipment.

"b. Bureaus are reluctant to transfer idle equipment to other bureaus which might have immediate use for the particular equipment because no reimbursement is allowed and future operations may require its use.

"III. It is suggested that more efficient use of equipment could be obtained by:

"1. Obtaining the necessary legislative authority to permit the renting of equipment from one agency to another and placing such funds to the credit of the appropriation, current at the time, to be extended in accordance with existing law and for the purpose for which appropriated.

"2. The reimbursement of a bureau by another bureau when a transfer from one bureau or agency to another.

"4. The establishment of centrally located idle equipment pools by the Department where temporarily idle equipment might be stored and then distributed or rented to any bureau or agency in need of such equipment.

"5. The establishment of coordinated inspection services within the Department and the use of highly trained inspection services such as has been established by the Navy Department.

"It is the opinion of the Technical Advisory Board that if proper action were to be taken as outlined, the expenditure of Department funds for equipment during the next and subsequent years could be materially reduced. This reduction of expenditure within a few years should result in a decrease of investment in equipment by all bureaus and agencies in the Department of several million dollars."

An effective study of the whole problem of efficient, economical and adequate housing of Department activities, both in Washington and the Field, will produce improvements in administrative management and operations with resulting economies.

The proper management of space problems by the efficient application of certain basic principles which have been applied in a limited way, to date, by the Office of Plant and Operations, can effect material savings in expenditures by the Department.

By applying established criteria for space occupancy and the removal of files to the Archives, over 40,000 square feet of office space have been freed for further use in the South Building. Through this space and similar readjustments in other buildings, the entire Arlington Hotel Building and the space occupied at 1437 K Street, N. W., have been released.

7. Please advise me of any further ideas or recommendations which you may have not covered by the foregoing on the whole subject of administrative improvements and economies in operations as applied to:

(a) The work for which you are directly responsible.

(b) The Department as a whole.

Under this question, the Office of Plant and Operations, due to the short time of its existence, does not feel that it is in a position to constructively answer this question. It feels that because of economies which are resulting from some improvements in operation already in effect, constructive recommendations along this line should be held for future submission.

Sincerely yours,

(SIGNED) ARTHUR B. THATCHER
Chief, Office of Plant and Operations.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON



OFFICE OF PLANT AND OPERATIONS

September 20, 1939.

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. ARTHUR B. THATCHER,
Chief, Office of Plant and Operations.

Dear Mr. Thatcher:

In the Secretary's Memorandum to the Chiefs of Bureaus and Offices, dated August 16, 1939, Point 6 states: "If a departmental staff mechanism is established for the sole purpose of providing leadership and assistance in a continuing effort to devise and bring about improvements in administrative management and economies in operations throughout the Department, what specific fields do you consider may be most profitably explored? Your full and frank discussion of this point, together with your comment, suggestions and recommendations, is requested." Point 7 states: "Please advise me of any further ideas or recommendations which you may have, not covered by the foregoing, on the whole subject of administrative improvements and economies in operations as applied to: (a) The work for which you are directly responsible. (b) The Department as a whole."

I believe that under these points, we have an excellent opportunity of presenting to the Secretary the inefficiency in the operation of the maintenance work and reimbursable repair work now being performed by the Public Buildings Administration of the Federal Works Agency. Complaints are constantly being received from various Bureaus in regard to the services rendered by the above organization; consisting of delays in the execution of the work and the high cost for same. It is readily understandable that this organization as it is set up has a tremendous overhead as it not only performs work as required by the Department of Agriculture, but also work connected with other Departments over which it has control of the maintenance work.

It is my humble opinion that a grave mistake was made when the Department of Agriculture turned over to the, then, Department of the Interior the maintenance and cleaning of its buildings. True, certain economies might be expected in centralizing the work which involves several small buildings, but in an institution as large as the Department of Agriculture, I seriously doubt if any savings is made through this central organization.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY
RESEARCH REPORT

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

1955

1. Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of temperature on the rate of reaction between hydrogen peroxide and potassium permanganate in the presence of ceric sulfate as a catalyst.

The reaction was carried out in a series of flasks at different temperatures, and the rate of reaction was measured by the volume of oxygen gas evolved.

The results of the experiment show that the rate of reaction increases with increasing temperature, and that the effect of temperature is more pronounced at lower concentrations of the reactants.

The following table gives the data obtained from the experiment.

The data show that the rate of reaction is directly proportional to the concentration of hydrogen peroxide, and that the effect of temperature is more pronounced at lower concentrations of the reactants.

As an example of the inefficiency of the present arrangement, the force of the Federal Works Agency connected with the Department of Agriculture buildings are primarily interested in the maintenance and the electrical equipment therein, and receives from Congress money for this work. The Department of Agriculture, South Building particularly, houses one of the largest research experimental and testing laboratories in the country. The electrical equipment is required to be of the most modern or a little in advance of the commercial field. This special equipment represents an investment of hundreds of thousands of dollars. When electrical work is required on any of this laboratory apparatus and equipment, a reimbursable shop order is prepared and submitted to the Federal Works Agency. This matter is given secondary consideration by them as they are primarily interested in the maintenance angle. If an electrician can be spared, he is detailed to this work and the Bureau pays for the time to perform this duty as well as pays for the material and a large overhead charge. No regular care is given to the office or laboratory electrical equipment at the present time due to the fact that no work can be performed without a reimbursable shop order issued by the Bureau concerned. This shop order is transmitted to the Superintendent who then sends it to the Chief Electrician who in turn details an electrician to perform the work. This process takes not less than 3 days if an electrician is immediately available, and, in several cases extends to 3 weeks before the work is completed. I might say here that in emergency cases, by personal contact with the Superintendent, the work is handled expeditiously and the necessary bookwork is done after the job is finished.

What is said about electrical work holds true for all other work. One example in particular might be cited. During the recent reorganization, it was necessary to make several changes in space assignments which involved changes in partitions. Some were requested to be moved while others were requested to be installed. The procedure in handling this was as follows: The Bureau prepared a work request giving notations of the partition changes. This was sent to my office for entry and approval. It was then forwarded to the Superintendent of the Federal Works Agency who looked it over and then brought it back to my office requesting justification for moving same. In other words "Why is it necessary to make the change?" I suggested in each case that the work was necessary due to tenant changes, but this evidently did not satisfy him, and I had to elaborate further by stating that the partitions were necessary to separate Bureaus or to provide private offices for officials, or to make open space for large groups of employees, and several other reasons. After I made this explanation, the work request was then forwarded to the Buildings Manager's office where it was then again reviewed, approved, given a number and sent back to the Agriculture Superintendent. All of this consumed time consisting of from 3 days to 2 weeks.

As an example of the insufficiency of the present arrangement, the
force of the Federal Works Agency connected with the Department of Agri-
culture follows are primarily interested in the maintenance and the
electrical equipment thereof, and receive from Congress money for this
work. The Department of Agriculture, South Building, Washington, houses
one of the largest research laboratories and testing laboratories in the
country. The electrical equipment is installed to meet the most modern
or a little in advance of the commercial field. This electrical equipment
represents an investment of hundreds of thousands of dollars. When
electrical work is required on any of this laboratory apparatus and equip-
ment, a considerable shop order is prepared and submitted to the Federal
Works Agency. This matter is given secondary consideration by them as they
are primarily interested in the maintenance angle. If an electrician can
be secured, he is detailed to this work and the Bureau pays for the time
to perform this duty as well as pays for the electrician and a large overhead
charge. No further care is given to the office of laboratory electrical
equipment at the present time due to the fact that no work can be performed
without a reimbursement shop order issued by the Bureau concerned. This
shop order is transmitted to the electrician who then sends it to the
Chief Electrician who in turn details an electrician to perform the work.
This process takes not less than 3 days if an electrician is immediately
available, and in worst cases amounts to 5 weeks before the work is
completed. I might say here that in emergency cases, by personal contact
with the Superintendent, the work is handled expeditiously and the nec-
essary repairs are completed.

There is said about electrical work which runs for all other work.
One example is mentioned which is cited. During the recent reorganiza-
tion, it was necessary to move several offices to space buildings which
involved change in ventilation. Two were requested to be moved while
others were requested to be installed. The procedure in handling this
was as follows: The Bureau prepared a work schedule giving locations of
the various changes. This was sent to my office for entry and approval.
It was then forwarded to the Superintendent of the Federal Works Agency
who looked it over and then returned it back to my office requesting
justification for moving same. In other words "Why is it necessary to
make the change?" I requested him to come and see the work was necessary
due to present changes, but this evidently did not satisfy him, and I had
to elaborate further by stating that the ventilation was necessary to
prevent damage or to provide better offices for officials, or to make
good space for large groups of employees, and several other reasons.
After I made this explanation, the work request was then forwarded to
the Building Bureau's office where it was then again reviewed, approved,
given a number and sent back to the Administrative Superintendent. All of
this consumed time consisting of from 3 days to 5 weeks.

In justice to the Federal Works Agency I must say that no order has as yet been disapproved. It is simply the delay which embarrasses us in making immediate moves.

It is my earnest belief that the Department of Agriculture will operate more economically and efficiently if this maintenance work and special laboratory work can be done by the Department and not by the Federal Works Agency. I believe that if a study were conducted of the cost to the Department when the work was under the Department and a cost to the Department under the present arrangement, the difference in figures would show that the cost has been doubled as it is paying much more than it should for the services received.

Very truly yours,

W. B. Blake

Chief, Space Section.

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than it should for the services received.

Very truly yours,

Chief, Space Section.